



Elevenmile Fire Update

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Challis, ID - An infrared flight took place again last night after an active fire day yesterday that claimed an additional 300 acres.

Terrain driven runs and winds aligned yesterday, primarily in the west side of the Yankee Fork drainage. A smoke column was visible from Stanley, Idaho when the fire made a sustained mile and a half run. Today, firefighters will assess the fire's growth and put out hot spots that occurred east of Yankee Fork to ensure the fire does not move around Summit Rock.

On the west and south flanks of the fire, southerly winds blew the fire back into itself and caused the fire to actively back downhill toward Ninemile Creek. The fire also backed into Mill Creek. Despite active fire behavior, containment lines held through sustained 40mph winds. It continues to slowly roll north, towards the River of No Return Wilderness where the fire is monitored by air and ground firefighters.

Location: 17 miles west of Challis

Start Date: August 24

Cause: Lightning

Contained: 15%

Size: 10,387 acres

Total Personnel: 623

Resources:

- Crews: 15
- Helicopters: 7
- Engines: 26

In the event additional resources were needed in Mill Creek last night, fire equipment on the west flank of the fire prepositioned at the juncture of the Custer Motorway and the Forest boundary. High winds did not materialize through the night, and these resources were not needed. Today, given the reduced fire behavior, higher humidity and lower winds, these resources will return to Eightmile drainage to continue direct line construction. Firefighters are aware that while trees may look green, standing trees are under extreme stress and prime to burn. Every precaution is being taken to secure containment lines as safely and efficiently as possible.

Two felling teams are assigned to work on the southwest end of the Custer Motorway to assess the work that is needed open the road. Yesterday, the storm created additional blowdown in the roadway. More work is needed before the roadway can safely be opened. Felling crews will continue to work along the roadway to open it as soon as possible.

Two new crews will arrive today to replace crews that will reach their 14 day maximum assignment lengths today. Operations Section Chief, Dave Easton, said this morning, "the fire is looking very good today and Division Group Supervisors now feel comfortable with the resources they have."

While 15 percent of the fire has a secure containment line, 50 percent of the fire (everything west of Yankee Fork) is in monitor status. Large islands of unburned fuel remain along the fire's perimeter and interior to the burn, which increases risk to firefighters as they work and makes securing the containment of the fire more difficult. The objectives of the fire will be met when there is full confidence the fire cannot move south into Pack or Mill Creek drainages.

Weather: Much cooler temperatures and higher relative humidity associated with an approaching cold front will keep the fire behavior minimal for the next several days. This will allow firefighters to make solid progress constructing direct handline and mopping up areas along the southern perimeter of the fire. By Saturday, the cold front may bring wetting rain to Challis and snow above 8,000 feet. In preparation for this event, firefighters will be transported out of high elevation spike camps.

Area/Trail Closures: An Emergency Area Closure remains in effect and will shrink when the fire is no longer a threat and fire traffic on roadways lightens. The closure area includes the following roads, campgrounds and all areas within to provide protection to forest visitors. The following roads are closed: Bayhorse Road (#40051); Trearor Creek Road, including the Squaw Creek Rd. (#40045); Custer Motor Way (#40070) at Five Mile Creek & Junction with Garden Creek Road (#400901); Kinnikinic Creek Road (#40053); Mill Creek Campground; Mosquito Flat Campground. Sleeping Deer Road (#40086) is OPEN

A trail closure remains in effect for the River of No Return Wilderness as a precautionary measure in the event the fire moves into the Wilderness. Warm Springs Trail (#4104) East Mayfield-Yankee Trail (#4114); Trapper Creek (# 4119) and Kerr Creek Trails are closed to provide public safety from wildland fire hazards associated with the fire.

#Elevenmile#

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